

The AFAN steering committee has been forced to take the step of holding a recall vote for Frank Piechoski. We tried to handle this internally, but as that did not resolve the issue, our current bylaws leave us no remaining option besides this. We previously delivered a letter outlining the unacceptable actions he has taken and requesting resignation, signed by the steering committee (SC) with two abstentions by brand new members, which would have allowed him to leave less publicly. This is not the first time that Frank has created serious problems with an astrological organization, and it is only due to AFAN's current bylaws that you are hearing more specifics about this instance.

Unfortunately, his response was not to resign. He denied ever doing anything wrong, sarcastically dismissed our concerns, and threatened public retribution if we held a recall vote. Instead of taking any accountability, these were some of his closing words in response to our letter in August: "You might want to think long and hard about taking this issue to the Networkers. My roots in AFAN are long and deep...If you go forward, I'll make not only the accusations against me public and defend myself, but I'll make public every single infraction of the SC. I've downloaded four years' worth of minutes. Some of those minutes show improper procedures were followed." That included years that neither he nor any current SC members were on the SC yet – in other words, he was going to go looking for possible past problems, even though they had nothing to do with current members, as a threat.

Unfortunately, this continues a series of his attempting to accuse us of violating bylaws to others, whether outright false accusations or merely minutiae, as will be shown below. The problems he has created have been undermining our ability to productively serve our members and have immensely drained our time and energy away from real work that needs to get done. In order for the steering committee to be effective for our members, we must be able to work as a team, and these dynamics make this impossible. Despite this being severely disruptive to the SC, in order to not interrupt things we deliberately waited to contact anyone about this recall petition until after the recent AFAN speaker vote for UAC was complete. None of us wanted to have to take this step, but we hope that since this is our only recourse, you will help us resolve this to move forward.

Some examples of issues:

-July 2015 - Frank expressed interest in being a UAC representative, but after sending his resume, he sent conference coordinator Laura Nalbandian a private message via Facebook that sounded kind of odd, stating such things as what position to give him if she didn't trust him, that he was able to 'suspend personal issues' to do what is right, and "I'm a hard worker, no matter what others may think." These statements would likely raise red flags for many people as the first communication received from someone wanting a position, and in part because of this, she expressed a preference to work with others from the SC committee if possible.

-Mid-August 2015 - Just a few weeks after this, he emailed a letter to a list of advisors and additional unrelated astrologers, declaring more than once that "something is rotten in the state of AFAN." He proceeded with a number of false accusations against the steering committee, including that we routinely conducted business without quorum and had done so since before he joined the SC. This charge was categorically false, yet since this was sent behind our backs we

had no opportunity to quickly set the record straight. The resulting discussion had gotten to the point of at least one advisor thinking someone might need to step in to correct our bylaws violations by the time our presiding officer got a concerned email saying they heard we were voting without quorum.

-In the same letter, he insinuated that there may not have been an official process to elect the current presiding officer. The steering committee actually voted on that during the year prior to his arrival - thus he was not even a SC member when the vote happened. There were numerous other complaints voiced as violations we could easily respond to, such as saying Coordinators are required by the bylaws but we're ignorant of their existence, when in actuality this structure hasn't existed for years and the bylaws just need revising to reflect that, but we need to summarize here.

-Spring 2016 - Months later, he privately contacted an individual SC member to say that having chosen our current presiding officer from amongst the steering committee members was unprecedented and not allowed. The SC member contacted an advisor to ask if this was true, and was told that both charges were absolutely false - there have been several presiding officers that were chosen while serving as SC members, and there is no bylaw against this. To suddenly and privately try to convince another SC member that the presiding officer was never eligible for her position, two years after being elected, is an undermining behavior. This accusation, similar to the ones in the secret letter, only happened after he didn't get what he wanted personally.

-Continuing for over a year, he has repeatedly argued against anyone besides the SC being allowed input in approving AFAN's UAC reps. The operating agreement approved by all the boards states: "The additional members of the (UAC) Committee, as well as all staff members, will be chosen based on the criteria of timeliness, competency and ability to work harmoniously with others, as agreed to unanimously by the heads of the three sponsoring orgs." There were concerns about him meeting these criteria, which have been confirmed by subsequent actions he has taken. Further, the AFAN SC did not vote for him to be a UAC rep, so this was not overruling any sort of SC decision - it was a simply a different model this time, and one that sensibly required certain minimum standards of conduct to work in a group.

Recently he began repeatedly speaking negatively about Laura Nalbandian's past UAC involvement, but again, only starting after not getting the position he wanted. Laura was hired with the AFAN SC's approval in May 2015, while Frank was a member, and she had already been doing substantial work as conference coordinator for a full year at this point. As an example, during a SC meeting this summer, he interrupted the agenda to reiterate his negative statements. He ignored attempts to redirect back to the meeting's agenda, and simply talked over these prompts to repeat irrelevant stories meant to cast negative associations. This has been disruptive to the actual current work that needs to be done. His response to this in our letter was that we were mistaking relaying facts for making attacks, but this is disingenuous given that the decision about hiring her for the position was over a year in the past.

-July 2016 - Most recently, he sent an email to the steering committee that was cc'd to some advisors and other astrologers who are not even AFAN members, declaring that we hadn't published a membership directory specifically during the spring season of this even-numbered year, and that this was a violation of bylaws and should be taken seriously - which at this point

seems to be part of a longstanding pattern of accusing the SC of violating bylaws to other people. The previous charges were false, while this one (not done in the correct season) was merely flimsy, given that it's almost never been done in spring, at least in the last 10 years, and has sometimes wrapped around to a different year. His language around this and cc'ing to a list of other people, however, was as though we were committing a grave violation that everyone needed to know about. He also decided to take this action during the lead up to UAC speaker voting, when we have had an abundance of current work to focus on, and while members were actively renewing in order to vote. His creation of a false emergency required a major diversion from that work in order to respond and to address all of the many subsequent communications that resulted from this for several weeks.

-Spring 2015 - Only a few months after joining the SC and before these other problems, he publicly posted a message on the presiding officer's Facebook page that included, "You are both gorgeous and not into me, and I know why." After being kind of shocked and not knowing how to respond, she deleted the posts and then contacted him privately, and tried to make things less awkward because of knowing she had to work with him for four more years. She mentioned this to the SC recently, after we discovered there was a larger pattern of sending various types of inappropriate communications while on the SC. When he responded to this part of our letter requesting resignation, he replied by copying in full to the group her subsequent private messages to him, and then saying "Really damning, isn't it? Leisa seemed highly upset. Not." It should go without saying, but the ability to be diplomatic when one shouldn't have to be is hardly the gauge of whether the original message was inappropriate.

One thing to keep in mind while reading his rebuttal statement is that, in our experience of actually working with Frank, he constantly talks about himself as a responsible and hard working person who is looking out for AFAN's members, but his actions just do not line up with that self-presentation. He has done almost no work for the SC, and the little that was done was executed badly. He has contributed almost nothing for his main committee chair position (Media Watch/Public Information) in going on two years, despite being asked to do so. He attempts to counter this by saying he just responds to what's needed and there haven't been any such news items, but even SC members for whom this isn't a focus have noticed things that weren't caught. He does attend meetings, but otherwise has been working against the group's interests. After threatening us against taking further action, he abruptly switched to visibly 'good' behavior, most markedly in response to new SC members who hadn't witnessed his prior behaviors. However, that does not make this situation workable, as the previous false accusations were made to others at times when he was not obviously acting out in front of us.

All of the actions detailed above and the overall negative approach he has brought to the SC have been a major disruption to us being able to do the actual work of AFAN. There are some additional details not included here, and we fully expect he will try to make these behaviors sound warranted and reasonable out of full context, as has happened already with his responses to us, but this is already long. If anyone wants to see the letters, messages, or minutes related to this petition, we have those available. Some of us are honestly exhausted from dealing with this, and cannot continue working on behalf of AFAN if it remains unresolved. Because of this, the AFAN steering committee requests your vote of 'yes' on the recall vote. Thank you for your time and attention.

